



**Fire Management Program**  
**San Carlos Apache Tribe**  
**San Carlos, Arizona**  
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## **NEWS RELEASE**

Released June 4, 2006  
12:00 noon

**SAN CARLOS APACHE RESERVATION** - The Bonita Fire is currently burning in the southeast corner of the San Carlos Apache Reservation, on Bryce Mountain, located in the east central part of Arizona. The Bonita Fire was reported to San Carlos Fire Dispatch on Saturday, June 3, 2006 at 1504 and has since burned more than 2,000 acres. The lightning caused fire is burning brush and grass, consisting of oak and juniper and some ponderosa pine. With current drought conditions, the fuels are quickly causing the fire to spread in a southeast direction toward the Safford Fire District.

The fire is located 80 miles east of San Carlos, AZ and 15 miles north of the city of Safford.

The San Carlos Bureau of Indian Agency is the lead agency. Incident Commander for the Bonita Fire is Dennis Logan of the San Carlos Apache Tribal Fire Use Program. Hot Shot crews from Globe, Ft. Apache, Feather River (CA) and Prescott are taking the lead in the effort to contain the blaze. More than 250 fire personnel, including San Carlos Crews 31, 32, 35, 36 and engine and fire use crews, and air tankers and support, are currently committed to the Bonita Fire.

The Bonita Fire has the potential to create fire danger to cultural resources and to the Gila Chub, an endangered fish species whose habitat is in Bonita Creek. The threats to wildlife habitat, soils, water and air quality also exist.

The Type I crews are battling the rugged terrain in areas requiring two and a half hours to reach from the main road Indian Route 8. Crews will continue to work to suppress the blaze and meet the Incident Plan objectives for the fire. Firefighter and public safety is the first priority.

The threat for fire activity on the San Carlos Apache Reservation remains HIGH. Weather forecasts for the area call isolated afternoon thunderstorms over the mountain areas with wind gusts expected. Near record highs are also expected.

If you have any questions concerning fire activity on the San Carlos Apache Reservation, contact Wilbur Belvado, Fire Operation Manager or Norbert Pechuli, Fire Center Manager at San Carlos Dispatch at (928) 475-2868.

As of June 4, 2006 at 1200 the Bonita Fire is the only fire on the San Carlos Apache Reservation and is 50% percent contained. The estimated date for containment is Tuesday, June 6, 2006.